

# Contemplative Prayer

By Susan Vogt

Maybe you're not the memorized prayer type of person, nor do you like to be confined to a scripture reading or a devotional book. Not to worry, there are many ways to pray and this one only takes your presence and attention. For those who have plenty of excuses for not praying but genuinely want to know God's presence, contemplative prayer may be something to try.

## For

Adult, Couple

## Season

Winter

## Needed

A little quiet time



## Activity Plan

1. Although Contemplative Prayer can be formless, it helps to have the intention to begin. Find a quiet time and place and put yourself in the presence of God. God is always present of course, but calling God's presence to mind helps one start. Begin with something such as:

*OK God, I'm here. Help me to be aware of your presence and listen to you.*

Others have found it to be helpful to use the phrase:

*"Be still and know that I am God."*

2. Look around you and notice stuff. Perhaps you are in nature or maybe just your bedroom. Wherever you are, there are things around you – living things, windows, sounds, household items, doors, smells, and so on. Pick something to focus on. It could be as simple as a door knob or a blade of grass. Start to let the object or sensation speak to you of God. For example:
  - A doorknob is an aid to entering a room. Is God turning the knob to come and say hello. A doorknob is round. A circle like this is never ending – like God. The knob may be spherical like a globe. Think of how God is present all over our planet – and yet right here too.
  - A blade of grass is so insignificant by itself (like me) but together with all the other blades it makes a lawn. Grass is fragile yet resilient. I can easily break one blade. I can bend the grass by walking on it but it will eventually spring back up. People are like that. Grass cannot survive without roots though. I want to stay rooted in God.

Let your imagination wander. If you get distracted and notice it, that's OK. Maybe that's the thought God wants you to pray about because it's important to you.
3. When you've followed the promptings of your environment for as long as you like, simply end with a prayer of thanks.
4. Resume whatever you were doing before, hopefully with a calm and centeredness that will permeate your other work for awhile
5. Variation. Some people may find it helpful to have a journal to capture the thoughts and feelings that occur to you during contemplation. This may help you stay focused. It's okay. It's also okay to go off on tangents. Everything is okay. The important thing is to keeping seeing connections between your experiences and God.